

Santiago in 1914---Queer Features of Life and Business in Chilean Capital

A Bird's-Eye View From Santa Lucia—The New Stores and How Business Methods Are Changing—The Passing of the Manta—Social Features—The Theatre and the Races—Charities and How They Are Managed—The World's Finest Cemetery—Something About the Church and Press.

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

I WANT to give you some pictures of Santiago. It is the social, political and business heart of this country. It is the pulse of the nation and the people move as it beats fast or slow. It contains all of the state men and most of the money. It is the centre of all great movements, and, in fact, it might be called Chile itself. The Santiago of 1914 contains fully one-sixth of all the people in the republic. It has a population of over 500,000, and has doubled in size in the past fifteen years. It has grown in beauty and modern improvements. It has widened its streets and paved them with asphalt. The Alameda has become a grand boulevard, with a garden running through the centre and driveways on each side. The Cousino Park, the gift of the millionaire family that owns the coal mines, has sprung up on one side of the city and a forest park has been created, skirting both of the banks of Mapocho River. The Quinta Normal has been greatly improved, and Santa Lucia, the table mountain that rises straight up from the heart of the city, has been developed into a creation more wonderful than the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

I wish I could show you Santa Lucia! No city of the world has a public park to compare with it. If you could drop down into the very centre of Philadelphia, Baltimore or Boston a mighty rock with almost precipitous walls, 300 feet high and with a base of 100 acres or more, you might have the park as it was at the beginning. To make it what it is now, you would have to cover the walls with vines, plants and trees until the whole became one mass of green. This mass would include eucalyptus and palms, oak trees and pines and semitropical plants and flowers of every description. The rock is so rough that natural grottoes are formed in its walls, and as you climb your way up you go past fountain after fountain and waterfall after waterfall. You walk through paths shaded by gigantic fern trees and flowers of many colors, the names of which are unknown in North America. Every step upward gives a different view of the city, and at the top a beautiful little park, at the height of a thirty-story flat, overhangs the capital of the Chilean republic. The centre of this park, right on the top, is a level space floored with tiles, where the city band plays at an evening, and there on a curtain stretched across the rock is an open-air moving picture show, where the people sit out under the clear sky of the Andes, as the doings of other parts of the world pass before them.

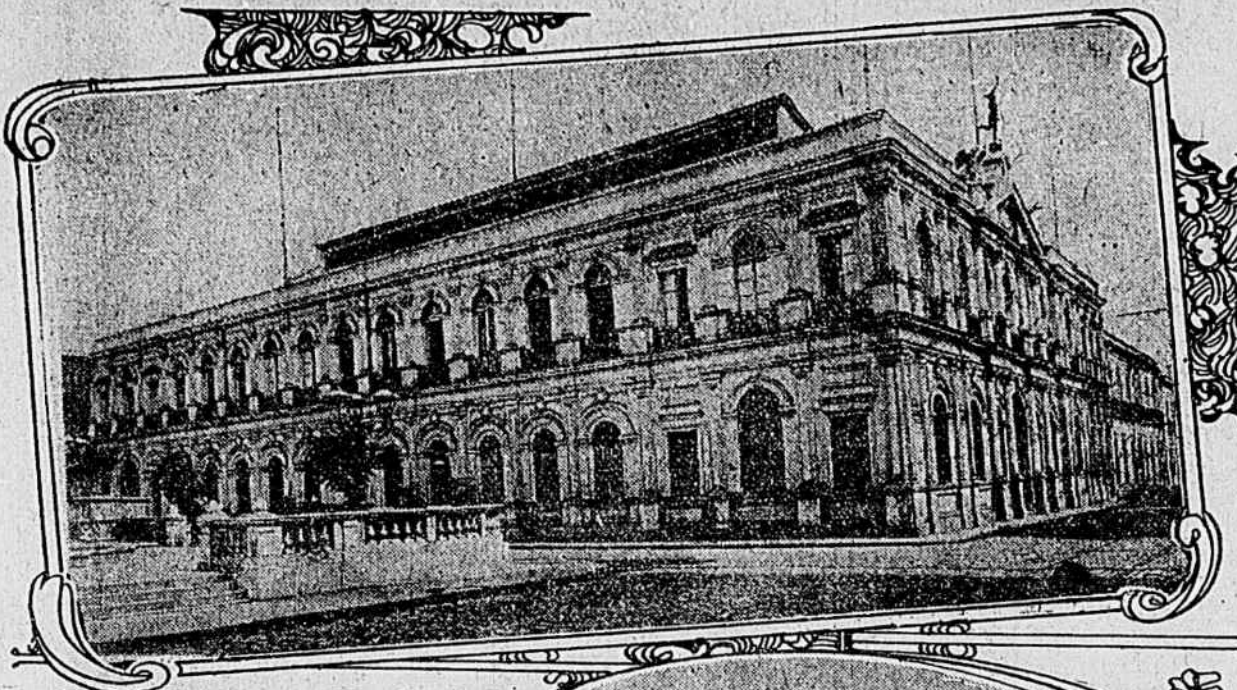
The view from Santa Lucia shows the magnificent location of Santiago. The town lies in flat basin of valley surrounded by rugged blue mountains. It is 1,700 feet above the Pacific Ocean and in plain sight of the Andes. Around one side of the city flows the Mapocho River, further down is the Malpo, and beyond them are the rich farms, orchards and vineyards of the great central valley. The city is right under and all around you. It is a vast expanse of gray roofs, cut by streets and there by wide streets that cross one another at right angles. In its centre is the Plaza des Armas, on which stand the cathedral, the city hall and other great buildings, and a little further over, taking up a whole square, is the Chilean Capitol or House of Congress, one of the finest buildings of all South America. The Capitol building is surrounded by gardens filled with tropical trees, including great palms, the trunks of which are as large around as a hoghead, although they are not more than thirty feet high.

Now look down over your feet! Right under you begins the Alameda, the Pennsylvania Avenue or Commonwealth Avenue of Santiago. It is lined with magnificent buildings and here and there over the whole city you can see the spires of churches rising above the roofs of the buildings. You can also see trees apparently growing right out of the houses. Those trees are in the patios. Many of the buildings are of Spanish style, running about gardens filled with roses and palms and other tropical trees.

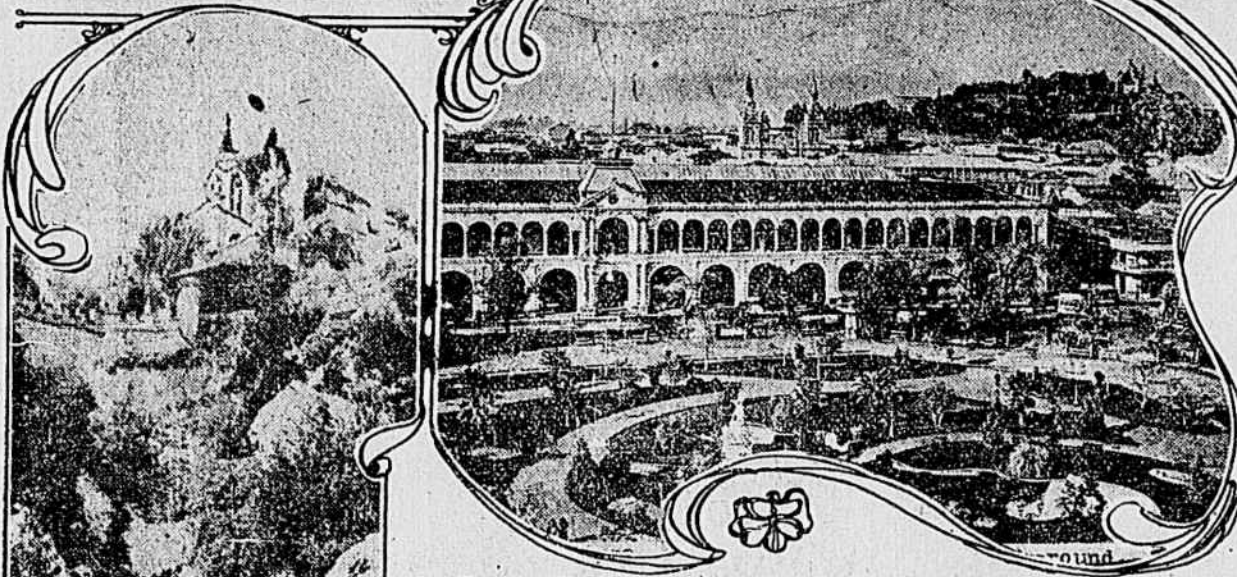
But let us go down from Santa Lucia and take a ride through the city. There are plenty of street cars with woman conductors, who will give us a seat on the roof for 5 or 6 cents, or we can get an automobile quite as cheap as in any town in North America. We choose the motor car, and fly this way and that through the town. How big the houses are and how low! The older ones cover acres and but few of them have more than two stories. They are made of brick, plastered with stucco and painted in the brightest of colors. In the best parts of the city the architecture is Greek. The doors are upheld by pillars, and I venture there are more Corinthian and Doric columns in Santiago than in Athens. Others of the residences are like Italian palaces, and not a few have each cost \$100,000 and upward. Nearly every great house has some legend connected with it. There is a magnificent one on the Alameda, whose plans were drawn in Paris and sent out to the builders. In some way they got the plans mixed and put the back of the house to the street, and so it is to this day.

Now we are in the business part of Santiago. Here there are many fine buildings that have grown up within the past few years. There are magnificent stores with the goods of the latest patterns from Europe. The town is not a dull place, with its wide streets and its many arcades. The business blocks are large, and the fact that they are not skyscrapers makes it possible to cut these covered passages through them. The buildings are decorated with glass. Often a block containing several acres will have arcades that cross one another at right angles. Each is a favorite promenade, for the huge roof sheds off winter winds and at the same time gives plenty of light. The stores in the arcades bring good rents.

I find a great difference in the stores of Santiago over those that I saw here about fifteen years ago. At that time there was no attempt at display. The prices were not marked on the goods, and nearly all dealing was a matter of haggling and sale. Now every large store has its plate glass windows and the price marks are changed from day to day. This revolution was caused about four years ago by the inauguration of a department store. This was a branch of the Buenos Ayres establishment. It sold goods at fixed prices and had expert window dressers who



The Mercurio Building



Santiago—The Andes in the Distance



Santa Lucia

changed the display every night. The people took to it and they forsook the old stores in such numbers that many of them failed. To-day a new class of business establishment is going up. The buildings are of several stories, with a more regular sky line than that of our American cities. They are more like the shops of Germany and France than those of North America, and, indeed, in many respects the town is a miniature Paris.

The street scenes of Santiago are a combination of the old and the new. You will see the donkeys and mules carrying their panniers of vegetables and fruits about from door to door. You still see horses close to the sidewalk, hobbled by ropes around their front legs, and the ox-cart still creates a way through the town. At the same time there are cabs and automobiles everywhere. The street cars have great numbers on them indicating their routes and there are motor cars that carry the heavier merchandise and all kinds of building materials.

The people have changed and the characteristic costumes of the past are framed upon the heels of the present. There are Paris bonnets and silk skirts everywhere, and also women and girls clad in black with mantas or black shawls covering their heads, necks and shoulders, so that only the faces show out of the black. The costume used to be common with the rich and poor. It is now dying out among those who can afford the more costly modern clothing, and the rich and fashionable new costume is used almost altogether for going to church. The laws of the church here provide that no woman can come into a religious service wearing a bonnet, and the only acceptable costume is a black manta with a manta of black crepe wrapped around the face close under the chin and fastened there with a brooch. Or it may be pinned at the back of the neck with a black pin. Some of the young women are now wearing black veils instead of these mantas, and not a few of them have black dresses that are cut rather low at the neck. I have seen girls in mantas wearing shoes of white kid and light-colored gowns, but this is not considered good taste.

The manta is often used for shopping during the morning, the better clothes being reserved for the promenade between 5 and 7 in the afternoon, the hours when every one goes along the chief business streets to see and be seen. The manta has the advantage that it can be thrown on quickly, and also that it hides any slovenly dressing beneath. To my mind, it is far better than the headgear of our women, and it makes many a homely face almost beautiful, throwing it out, as it were, against the black crepe. It has the disadvantage, however, that it is the common street garb of the Santiago girls who are not so good as they should be. So dressed, these little sinners have the appearance of saints, and no stranger would imagine the class to which they belong until a look from the fall of their eyes gave him the wink.

I would say, however, that the Chileans are usually well dressed. The richer women import many of their gowns and hats from Paris, and the men of the same class look as though they had just come out of a haberdashery. There are fine furniture stores and dressmaking establishments with the latest models from Paris. The soldiers wear fine uniforms and the policemen have suits of white duck with white helmets. Altogether, the people are as well clothed as those of similar classes in the United States, and the business and professional men are more

particular as to their dress than we are.

Santiago is not a cheap city in which to live. It is a town of the very rich and the very poor. Many of the citizens own large estates out in the country and live at the capital, where they have magnificent houses and entertain in grand style. The city has a municipal theatre subsidized by the government. This gives a season of Italian opera which lasts for eight nights. The companies are brought from Italy and the opera house is one of the finest in the world. On such fashionable occasions full dress is always worn and the ladies are resplendent with diamonds. The men keep their heads bare during the performance, and as soon as the curtain falls every man puts on his hat. He may stand up in his seat and sweep the house with his opera glass, staring at

such of the ladies as interest him. There is a great deal of visiting among the friends in the boxes during the intermissions, and the opera is more of a social occasion than a musical one.

Another social feature is the races, which are usually held upon Sundays. Santiago has one of the finest race tracks of the world. It is outside the city on a plain surrounded by mountains which rise up against the horizon like walls of snow. Above these white walls is stretched a sky of the bluest blue, and in winter, when the best races take place, the weather is as mild as June in Virginia. The ladies come out in their summer dresses and they walk about through the parks and gardens not far from the grand stand. The race track is owned by the Club Hípico de Santiago. This club has done much to improve the breeding of horses in Chile

and has made the Chilean horse one of the best in the world. The Chilean horse is a cross between the Flammand and the Arabian horse brought here by the Spanish conquerors, which through the temperate climate and the cold snow has grown into what is an entirely new type. It has great staying qualities, with an extraordinary courage and spirit. Like the Arabian horse, it eats but little, and it has all the endurance of the Arab and the strength of the Flammand.

A part of the race track receipts and also of the lottery receipts of Chile are given to charity. The charities are under an organization known as the Junta de Beneficencia, which is one of the richest institutions of Chile. It gets its income not only from private charity, but also from its own properties and from funds donated by the state. It has ninety-seven boards of management, and altogether 122 charitable institutions. Here in Santiago it has a home for children that accommodates 1,000 inmates and also a children's eating-house that supplies meals at regular hours to poor mothers and children to the number of 1,000 daily. It has orphan asylums, associations for giving cheap homes to working people, tuberculosis hospitals and founding asylums.

Under the care of the Junta de Beneficencia is the cemetery of Santiago, which is one of the most beautiful of the world. It was founded by General O'Higgins, when he was president of the republic along about the time that John Quincy Adams was in the White House. Before that the Catholics had their own cemetery and there was no place for the poor nor for the heretics. General O'Higgins believed that death makes all men equal, and he established this great burial ground.

The cemetery is an enormous inclosure, filled with old cypress trees that extend for seventy-five to 100 feet above the ground. The trees are so close that the paved sidewalks and courts. It is a real city of the dead, with many vaults and monuments, the coffins being stored away above the ground in houses of marble, granite or sandstone. One of the finest monuments is the bronze figure of a woman who stands on a pedestal with her arms outstretched toward heaven. This is to commemorate the 2,000 women who were burned to death when the church of the Jesuits took fire and was completely destroyed. That was in December, 1862. Santiago had then no fire brigade and the inmates crowded to the doors which opened inward and forced them shut so that they could not get out. One of the men who did the most to save the women was the American minister, Mr. William Wilson. He received a testimonial from the city for his courage and is still remembered there.

Another striking monument of this cemetery is a bronze figure of Christ. It stands right in the centre of the city of the dead, with the avenues radiating from the four sides of the rock pedestal upon which the Christ stands. The rock represents Calvary. The figure is more than life size, and it is wonderfully effective and impressive. It is the finest monument I have ever seen in any cemetery.

Santiago is a city of many churches and schools. Full religious tolerance is granted by the state. The Catholics have their missions and churches and schools in different parts of the republic. Roman Catholicism is the state religion, and the church receives a large subsidy from the government. The rest of the people are Protestants, and that church is extraordinarily rich. It owns in Santiago alone property to the amount of \$100,000 in gold. It has some of the best business blocks, and the whole of one side of the plaza, which is the centre of the business, belongs to it. It has thousands of rented houses and acres of stores, it owns haciendas outside the city, upon which wines and other products are

manufactured and offered for sale. Nearly all of the church property is controlled by the archbishop, although some of it is held by the different religious orders, male and female. The Carmelite nuns of this city are said to be the richest body of women in the world.

During my stay here I have visited the National Library, the National Museum and the St. Clara Convent, all of which are worth seeing. The library adjoins the Supreme Court building, but a new site has been chosen for the new building. The library has about 600,000 volumes, and a special feature of it is a collection of native newspapers that goes back to the beginning of the century. Among these are copies of the first paper that was published in South America, and also of the Aurora, the first paper issued in Chile. The latter is dated February 13, 1832, and, strange to say, its editors and printers were men from the United States, this fact being stated on the title page.

The Chile of to-day has excellent newspapers. It has altogether about seventy dailies and more than 200 weeklies and semi-weeklies. There are a hundred different periodicals issued here in Santiago, the chief of which is the Mercurio. This has editions for both the capital and for Valparaiso, and it is published both morning and evening. Like the New York Herald, its evening edition is printed in pink. It has a Sunday issue, including features similar to those of our metropolitan dailies. The paper has fine offices in Santiago, with a counting room, a library and a reading room, and it looks more like the editorial office of a newspaper than the ordinary place for transacting such business. It belongs to Don Auguste Edwards, one of the richest men of Chile, and at present minister from this country to Great Britain.

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NORWOOD

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) NORWOOD, Va., October 21.—The Conner reunion, which has been held in Nelson for a month, has just closed. The last two weeks by Mrs. Sidney Bolton, at her home here. This family was reared here, but as years in the past they had drifted to distant lands, leaving two of the family in the city. The reunion was the party of Mrs. Conner, of Oregon, who is now in the city, and Mrs. Hattie Conner, of Los Angeles, Cal.; Mrs. William Conner, of Richmond; Mrs. Julia Ligon and Mrs. Sidney Bolton, of Nelson, Mrs.

George Gaines, of Richmond, and Mrs. Miller, of Oregon, two sisters, could not be with them. The entertainment which was given by the high school scholars on Saturday night in the Town Hall was quite a success. In every way, Miss Alice Lemon, a teacher, received the prize for the prettiest girl while George Cabell carried off the pipe for the ugliest man.

C. Cabell Robinson left on Tuesday for West Point to spend some time with Colonel Wirt Robinson.

Willie Conner and little daughter, Virginia, will leave on Monday for their home in Los Angeles, Cal.

Mrs. William Robertson, who has been on a visit to her sister, Mrs. Sidney Bolton, was summoned home on Monday by the illness of her daughter, Miss Queeny Robertson, of Richmond.

Harry McGuire of Lynchburg, was the week-end guest of his sister, Mrs. J. L. Kidd, this week.

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